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## Navy Nurse Corps 106th Birthday, A week-long remembrance at Naval Hospital Bremerton

BY VJOHNSON – MAY 7, 2014

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By Douglas H Stutz, Naval Hospital Bremerton Public Affairs

The Navy Nurse Corps 106th Birthday is being recognized at Naval Hospital Bremerton with a slate of week-long events that culminates with a memorial run in remembrance for one of their own before their actual birth date of May 13.

The schedule commenced in earnest on May 6 with the Nurse Corps Professional Development Committee's 'Speed Mentoring' event that gave prospective officer and enlisted Sailors interested in a specific field of nursing the chance to gain information and insight from experienced subject matter experts and mentors.



Information sharing was the theme for Naval Hospital Bremerton Nurse Corps' 'Speed Mentoring' event held on May 6. Lt.

James Jeff of Intensive Care Unit explains the varied roles of being an ICU and emergency nursing to attending servicemembers asking questions for increased knowledge on becoming a Navy Nurse Corps officer. There was over a dozen specific nursing fields experts on hand including nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, operational nursing, peri-operative nursing and critical care nursing (Photo by Douglas H Stutz, NHB Public Affairs).



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The event was tailored for all those interested to spend a few minutes with Nurse Corps experts and gain knowledge on career interests as well as give the nurses a chance to explain their varied roles.

Lt. j.g. Zackary Byrne of the Multi-Service Ward took on the role as coordinator for Speed Mentoring because he felt it would be important for junior Nurse Corps officers and enlisted to have such a venue to provide easy access to information about advanced careers in nursing.

“Nursing is a vast and diverse field. It can be overwhelming at times when planning your career. A program like Speed Mentoring will give sailors a concentrated source of information about the many avenues nursing has to offer,” said Byrne.

Byrne’s goal with the Speed Mentoring event was to gather senior and experienced nurses from a wide range of advanced roles and have them present in an informal and relaxed atmosphere where attending servicemembers could ask questions and gain knowledge on becoming a Navy Nurse Corps officer. There was over a dozen specific nursing fields experts on hand including nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, operational nursing, emergency nursing, peri-operative nursing and critical care nursing.

“There are so many different ways to achieve advanced careers in nursing, I wanted the senior nurses to be able to share their own stories and experiences and offer advice to up and coming sailors,” explained Byrne.

For Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tara MacDonald, NHB’s Branch Health Clinic Bangor Information Assurance Officer and Immunizations assistant leading petty officer, although already selected for the medical commissioning program and set to attend the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program for Nursing, there is still the need to choose a specific nursing field.

“I’m still deciding on a specialty and the opportunity to stop by here and talk to the experts is very helpful,” MacDonald said.

Byrne also attests that speed mentoring is beneficial for any interested servicemember.

“There are formal programs in place, like career development boards, but I wanted a program where interested sailors can informally sit, chat, and network with nurses experienced in their advanced roles. By providing a relaxed atmosphere, people can get advice on career and school choices, listen to stories about what worked well – or what didn’t work – and ultimately accomplish the Speed Mentoring program’s final goal of finding a mentor. The program can be used to “break the ice” and hopefully open use that professional connection as guidance when making difficult career choices,” Byrne said, sharing that as a former civilian junior nurse before joining the Navy in 2011, he didn’t have any formal mentoring program available and had to wade through overwhelming information on advanced nursing careers. He found the entire process time consuming and even somewhat intimidating at times.

The annual NHB Nurse Corps 5K run has been designated the Aloha Moani Memorial 5K run on May 10. The run is dedicated in memory of Lt. Rebekah Moani Daniel, NHB staff member lost in March due to a rare complication of childbirth. The event is expected to have over 200 runners along with Daniel’s family in attendance from California and Hawai’i. The event is open to the public and taking place at the neighboring Naval Housing Jackson Park.

“We consider this memorial run to really be the highlight of our entire week. It will be emotional for us all,” said Capt. Iris Boehnke, Director for Nursing Services.

There are approximately 165 active duty and civilian nurses assigned to NHB along with six American Red Cross nurse volunteers, out of the Navy’s active and reserve Nurse Corps

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components that total more than 4,000 members.


Navy Nurse Corps members will also be active in the extended community throughout the week. The nurses will visit the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil and Lt. Rachel Allnutt will be honored as one of three Junior Officers of the Year by the Kitsap Chapter Military Officers Association of America as part of the community’s annual Armed Forces Festival.

NHB nurses continue their pivotal roles in providing quality health care not just at home but also abroad. Nurse Corps staff members are preparing to participate in Pacific Partnership 2014 humanitarian assistance mission, as well as supporting Operation Enduring Freedom down range in Afghanistan.

The Navy Nurse Corps birthday also coincidentally happens to be during National Nurses Week that is annually recognized and celebrated May 6 to May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), the founder of modern nursing.

It was on May 13, 1908, that then-President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Naval Appropriations Bill that authorized the establishment of the Nurse Corps as a unique staff corps of the Navy.

As was the case 106 years ago, NHB’s Nurse Corps continues to provide care and support through direct patient care at the bedside or as a provider, in an administrative role, and even as a mentor and as a grieving staff member for those in need and for those in remembrance.



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